Unified Headquarters of security agencies

332. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has been proposed to set up a unified Headquarters' of security agencies involved in counter insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) if so, whether such a set up will be structured on the lines of one presently operating in Assam/North Eastern; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) to (c) No, Sir. However, in order to coordinate counter terrorism efforts in J&K, two Unified Headquarters (UHQs) at Srinagar and Jammu have been constituted by the State Government. As per the orders currently in force the Chief Minister J&K is the Chairman of both the UHQs and the two General Officers Commanding XV and XVI corps are its members along with other representatives of para-military agencies, State intelligence and civil administration. Recently the composition and working of the two UHQs was reviewed by the Government and it has been decided that there is no need for any change and that the existing system should continue to function in its present form.

Deputy Prime Minister's visit to the US

333. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the recent visit of the Deputy Prime Minister to the US, the US President had renewed his assurance to take up with Pakistani President Parvez Musharraf the need for creating a conducive atmosphere for Indian Prime Minister's peace initiative to succeed when the Pak President meets him later in June, 2003; and

(b) whether he also made it clear that conducive climates needed for peace talks, means a full stop to infiltration of terrorists and terrorist acts by them and includes a complete dismantling of terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pak occupied Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) U.S. President George W. Bush had expressed appreciation for Prime Minister's peace initiative towards Pakistan and acknowledged the problem of terrorism in that context. He also conveyed that he would raise the issue of cross-border infiltration and terrorism with President Musharraf at their Camp David meeting on June 24, 2003.

(b) President Bush stated on June 24,2003 that President Musharraf and he had discussed the need to address extremism and cross-border infiltration. In that context, he had also remarked that "we all must work together to fight off terrorists who would like to prevent a peaceful solution". The United State has stated that President Musharraf had given a commitment on a 100 per cent effort at trying to stop cross-border incidents. Government will assess the outcome of the commitment made by the President Musharraf by the evidence on the ground.

Cross-border infiltration

334. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Chief of Army Staff had met him on May 21, 2003 and briefed him on the prevailing security scenario in the Jammu and Kashmir State;

(b) if so, whether he was given the assessment of the situation in the backdrop of Pakistan's promises to curb cross-border infiltration;

(c) if so, whether there has been drop in cross-border infiltration; and

(d) tf not, what steps Government of India has taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) Yes, Sir. The Chief of the Army staff had met the Deputy Prime Minister on May 21, 2003 and briefed him on the prevailing security situation in J&K.

(b) Yes, Sir.